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Appropriations
Education
Joint legislative Committee
on the Budget
Labor and Industrial Relations

PATRICIA HAYNES SMITH
State Representative ~ District 67

June 20, 2011

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: GN Docket 11-65

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

As Chair of the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus and the representative for our state's 67th district, I am writing today to urge you to approve the proposed merger of AT&T with T-Mobile USA. This deal will improve coverage in rural and low income communities while increasing access to broadband services via wireless devices for minorities, who studies show access the web from mobile devices at a higher rate than the rest of the country.

The new opportunities that will be created in the wake of this merger will especially benefit the rural communities where jobs are needed most. Expanding wireless broadband to these areas will at last open the door for telework and telecommuting opportunities, allowing residents to seek and find job opportunities that are compatible with their personal schedules. In addition, the \$8 billion that the new AT&T will invest in building out its existing network will lead to quality jobs across the country and spur job growth in the economy.

Minority communities also stand to benefit from this merger in light of the widespread use of mobile devices to access the internet in those communities. The expanded educational opportunities will be especially meaningful in these communities, where we are still striving to close the "digital divide." This is why I am especially encouraged by the fact that this merger will result in coverage for more than 97% of Americans. At a time when social mobility is not possible without full and unfettered internet access, I feel that this merger will go a long way toward helping many Americans improve their quality of life and giving our economy a sorely needed boost.

As you analyze this deal thoroughly, I am confident that you will see its many benefits and grant it the necessary approval. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Rep. Patricia Smith

Rep. Patricia Haynes Smith
District 67